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THE LOTUS MAGAZINE

Volume IV

JANUARY, 1913

Number 4

THE LOTUS OF THE NILE.

*P*ROUD, languid lily of the sacred Nile,
'Tis strange to see thee on our western wave,
Far from those sandy shores that mile on mile,
Papyrus-plumed, stretch silent as the grave.

O'er limpid pool, and wide, palm-sheltered bay,
And round deep-dreaming isles, thy leaves expand,
Where Alexandrian barges plow their way,
Full-freighted, to the ancient Theban land.

On Karnak's lofty columns thou wert seen,
And spacious Luxor's temple-palace walls.
Each royal Pharaoh's emerald queen
Chose thee to deck her glittering banquet halls;

Yet thou art blossoming on this fairy lake
As regally, amidst these common things,
As on the shores where Nile's brown ripples break,
As in the ivory halls of Egypt's kings.

*Thy grace meets every passer's curious eyes,
But he whose thought is ranged through faiths of old
Gazing on thee feels lofty temples rise
About him, sees long lines of priests, white-stoled,*

*That chant strange music as they slowly pace,
Dim-columned aisles; hears trembling overhead
Echoes that lose themselves in that vast space,
Of Egypt's solemn ritual for the dead.*

*Ay, deeper thoughts than these, though undefined,
Start in the reflective soul at sight of thee,
For this majestic Orient faith enshrined
Man's yearning hope of Immortality.*

*And thou didst symbolize the deathless power
That under all decaying forms lies hid,
The Old World worshipped thee, O Lotus flower,
Then carved its sphinx and reared its pyramid.*

—ARTHUR WENTWORTH EATON.